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State for INL/LP - Natalia Bozzolo
WHA/CAR - Joe Tilghman

SENSITIVE, SIPDIS

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TAGS: [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [PREL](#) [JM](#) [XL](#)

SUBJECT: Jamaica: mid-year report card for 2009 Major's List
Determination

REFTEL: A) KINGSTON 264, B) STATE 29120, C) KINGSTON 417,
D) KINGSTON 470, E) KINGSTON 351

11. (SBU) Summary: In March, Ambassador Johnson presented then Minister of National Security Derrick Smith with the 2008 U.S. Benchmark for certification (ref A). Jamaica remains a major producer of marijuana and marijuana derivative products, which continue to affect the United States. This marijuana production, which easily exceeds the Major's list standard of 5,000 hectares per year, also fuels a thriving ganja-for-guns trade which has been blamed for the astonishing increase in violent crime, particularly murder in 2008 (ref B). While the volume of cocaine traffic transiting through Jamaica has decreased in past years, Jamaica remains a transit point of interest for cocaine dealers from South America. End Summary.

2008 Benchmarks

In the format requested ref (C), please find below Post's response.

12. (SBU) The USG asked the Government of Jamaica (GoJ) to strengthen and ensure the independence of the Financial investigations Division (FID) through passage of the FID Act, which will permit Jamaica to join the Egmont Group and allow for greater data sharing between the U.S. and Jamaica on money laundering investigations.

-- In April 2008, the current Minister of National Security informed Ambassador Johnson (ref D) that he and the Minister of Finance had agreed to bring the FID Act and a companion piece of legislation authorizing the new Asset Recovery Agency to Cabinet for approval and submission to Parliament.

13. (SBU) The USG asked the GoJ to increase interdiction activities by making key arrests of drug traffickers and dismantling at least one major trafficking organization.

-- The GoJ continued its interdiction efforts, focused on the seaside "ganja for guns" trade, which is fueling record levels of violent crime in Jamaica. Year-to-date, there have been almost 700 murders. If the current grisly trend continues unabated, Jamaica is set to eclipse the record year of 2005, when it received dubious distinction as the "murder capitol of the world." Interdiction efforts against the continued use of Jamaica as a transit point for cocaine also continued. There is a pending arrest of a major trafficker. The GoJ has agreed to apprehend him, pending receipt of the U.S. arrest warrant; action on this arrest is being held up on the U.S. side.

14. (SBU) The USG asked the GoJ to implement reform recommendations of the Ministry of National Security's Strategic Review of the Jamaica Constabulary Force, including the ability to dismiss and prosecute corrupt police officers regardless of rank, and the vetting of both current officers and new recruits.

-- The review is complete, is thorough, but needs tweaking before it

is released to the public. The National Security Council chaired by the Prime Minister is working with Review Panel to develop a roadmap with timetable for implementation of reforms. Support of the Anti-Corruption Division by Jamaica's international partners is key to the success of any reform of the Force. Unless corrupt senior officers have a credible fear of detection and prosecution, they will remain an obstacle to true change.

¶15. (SBU) The USG asked the GoJ to undertake thorough investigations into allegations of police corruption, regardless of rank, and create a special prosecutor for public corruption cases.

-- The Anti-Corruption Division already has arrested 25 lower level and mid level officers since its inception in September 2007 (ref E). The Ministry of Justice has completed drafting the legislation for a Special Prosecutor. It needs to be presented to Parliament for a vote; action on the bill should occur this year.

¶16. (SBU) The USG asked the GoJ to pass legislation to create the National Investigative and Intelligence Agency (NIIA) to coordinate investigations of public corruption for action by the new Anti-Corruption Special Prosecutor. Ideally, the NIIA will combine tax, the FID, police investigators, and intelligence analysts under one umbrella organization.

-- The draft NIIA bill is complete; however, the GoJ remains unsure how best to combine operations of all these separate organizations.

¶17. The USG asked the GoJ to participate in one regional drug interdiction exercise, to promote counternarcotics cooperation in the Caribbean.

-- Joint planning for Operation Riptide is well underway. Cooperation between U.S. and Jamaica has been excellent.

¶18. (SBU) The USG encouraged the GOJ to move forward on pending extraditions to ensure continued cooperation with the U.S. on extradition of wanted criminals.

-- Joint cooperation on extradition cases is good. There are six high-profile cases wending their way through Jamaica's notoriously clogged legal system. Given recent decisions by high courts on extradition matters, the prospects are good that the trial courts' extradition orders will stand. Once the traffickers' appeals are exhausted, the GoJ should work expeditiously to extradite them to the U.S.

Johnson